

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

May 1998

## VEMA president addresses membership

by Chris Eudailey  
Deputy Director of Emergency Services  
Spotsylvania County

*Eudailey is the newly elected president of the Virginia Emergency Management Association. In recent years, the 35-year-old organization has helped refocus emergency services around the state from Cold War-era civil defense planning to a coordinated emphasis on "all hazards" emergency planning.*



*Its diverse membership includes emergency services professionals from local, state and federal government, the military, the private sector and nonprofit and volunteer organizations.*

*Eudailey, a 20-year veteran in emergency services, outlines his vision of preparedness, response and outreach for the association's coming year.*

I'm looking forward to a productive year continuing my predecessor's work of promoting and supporting the twin goals of saving lives and protecting property during emergencies and disasters. Inherent in that mission is the continued effort to expand our membership.

By reaching out to nonmember localities and agencies, and by enlisting their participation in the disaster planning and preparedness process, we will help ensure an effective and appropriate response to the disasters and emergencies we know will occur. Through an expanded membership, we will spread VEMA's message that good planning and good resources management can minimize the impact of disasters in our communities.

VEMA serves its members as a "clearinghouse" for ideas, suggestions, shared experiences and courses of action. Our

summer training session and our annual winter conference are designed to stimulate thought, discussion and action.

VEMA encourages continuous professional development and supports legislative representation that reflects the concerns of the emergency services community.

Ultimately, all these efforts are geared toward the goal of mitigating emergencies in the Commonwealth and lessening the severity and disruption disasters cause in our communities. As emergency managers, we can greatly benefit our citizenry by using the myriad resources at our disposal to educate ourselves, our government, business leaders and the general public on disaster risk potential and the need for an all-hazards approach to planning and preparedness.

For more information about VEMA, call Chris Eudailey at 540/582-7095, e-mail [ceudailey@aol.com](mailto:ceudailey@aol.com), Joe Mellender at 703/278-8318, or e-mail Kim Cooney at [coo17@co.henrico.va.us](mailto:coo17@co.henrico.va.us)

## General Assembly enacts Crouch study into law

**I**n 1996, the General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution 72. Sponsored by Delegate Joyce Crouch, it proposed conducting a study on the feasibility of establishing a state emergency relief fund. Such a fund could provide state assistance to localities that are not approved for federal financial assistance, but are under a declaration of emergency by the governor.

The tornado that swept through Petersburg in 1993, causing extensive damage to public property, helped highlight the importance of the study. Although a presidential declaration was eventually

approved for that incident, it provided for Individual Assistance only.

The Crouch study recommendations, based on feedback from local government and other groups, were formalized into law last year by the General Assembly. Under Virginia code § 44-146.28, the governor can provide financial assistance to local government and nonprofit organizations — such as fire departments — when federal financial assistance is not forthcoming. The funds are meant to help local government with uninsured disaster-related costs, such as debris removal.

VDES Public Assistance Officer Bob

Andersen said, "We have been working over the past year to establish procedures under which such aid can be provided.

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# Virginia's emergency services garner awards

**V**irginia's emergency services community has been in the spotlight this year. Both individuals and organizations have received national recognition for outstanding contributions in the field.

Jim Talbot, Norfolk's deputy emergency services coordinator, received an Outstanding Achievement Award at the National Hurricane Conference this past April. The award recognized the years of high-quality effort

Talbot has dedicated to improving public safety in his community and for developing "one of the most effective and comprehensive local emergency management programs in the U.S."

Also recognized at the conference were staff from five National Weather Service offices who were presented the Governor's Award by Governor

nor Jim Gilmore. He acknowledged their work in alerting Virginia's citizens during severe weather events and in providing outstanding service to government, businesses and individuals. Staff from Virginia's Blacksburg, Sterling and Wakefield offices, and NWS staff in Charleston, West Virginia, and Morristown, Tennessee,



were honored by the governor.

At the EPA Region III conference this past December, the Chesterfield LEPC received the Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Partnership award. The award recognized the creative and effective partnerships the LEPC has established with various private and public sector organizations.

VDES congratulates these individuals and their organizations for their achievements.

## Hurricane season approaches

**T**his year's Hurricane Preparedness Week runs from May 31-June 6, which presents a prime opportunity to start your public education campaigns early in the season. Give your citizens advance notice on what they need to do to get ready.

Coastal and inland areas can be slammed, as Hurricane Fran illustrated. No part of the state is safe from the severe flooding and destructive winds a hurricane brings in its wake, so get started and get your communities ready. Look through your VDES Video and Publications Catalog and call 804/897-6510 to order your preparedness materials.

## FEMA updates publications

**A**n necessary resource for your elected officials is FEMA's publication titled, *Addressing Your Community's Flood Problems: A Guide for Elected Officials*. This booklet helps public officials understand and identify flood risks within their communities and outlines actions to take that can reduce these risks.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the issues, the publication illustrates the need to focus on flood problems by describing how flooding can disrupt the economic and social life of a community. It outlines mitigation activities, suggests how to promote floodplain management and describes ways to coordinate mitigation with other programs and activities for maximum results.

A list of resources, outside sources of assistance and ways in which flood losses can be reduced, wraps up this useful publication.

FEMA's updated version of *Answers to Questions About the National Flood*

*Insurance Program* covers the many changes mandated in the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994. The publication targets those who need to know: the general public, insurance companies and agents, lenders, regulators, realtors and government agencies.

Not only does the booklet describe how the program works today, it lists phone numbers for the NFIP and FEMA's regional offices, sources for flood mitigation guidelines, floodplain management studies and more.

Call 800/480-2520 to order. The elected officials guide is publication #309, and the NFIP update is publication #84. The NFIP update can be downloaded from FEMA's Web site at <http://www.fema.gov/nfip/>

A final note: Let your local businesses and industry know that FEMA's *Emergency Management Guide for Business and Industry* can now be downloaded from the Internet. When you visit the site, click on "Preparedness, Training and Exercises Room" in the Virtual Library.

## Crouch study

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This program will not affect other types of aid a locality may qualify for, including what local disaster recovery task forces can offer or the kinds of assistance other state agencies can provide."

The eligibility criteria are:

- Cities and counties are eligible;
- A declaration of local emergency is required;
- Cities and counties requesting funds must have sustained total eligible costs of four dollars or more per capita. Sites or facilities within the jurisdiction must have at least \$1,000 worth of damages or debris removal costs to be eligible;
- The city or county must have property insurance or be self-insured;
- The city or county must demonstrate that disaster-related costs can't be covered by any other means.

Funds can be used for debris removal, protective measures to reduce or eliminate hazards, or overtime pay for city or county employees. Monies can't be used for snow removal, beach sand restoration due to erosion, insurance deductibles or to match funds for federal disaster assistance programs.

For information, call Bob Andersen at 804/897-6538.

# HAZ MAT



## Rail yard fire tests Lynchburg responders

**A**t 9:31 a.m. on Tuesday, March 31, dispatchers received a call that a fire was raging at a railroad switching yard in downtown Lynchburg. Over the next 24 hours, the response evolved into one of the biggest in the city's recent history, but was wrapped up in a little over a day with no injuries and no deaths.

On that Tuesday, workers from Norfolk Southern Railroad were uncoupling a string of 65 cars which rolled downhill and struck an idle train of three engines and 61 cars. The impact caused 10 of the runaway cars to derail; several of them crashing into a city public facilities warehouse containing 16 salt spreaders, 16 snowplows, 2,500 tons of salt and 200 tons of calcium chloride.

One of the 10 cars contained 20,000 gallons of highly flammable acetone which caused a fire that was fed by fuel leaking from the damaged diesel engines. The warehouse and its contents were destroyed by the fire.

Although the Lynchburg Fire and EMS had not faced an incident on this scale before, the response was textbook-perfect. "The first units were on the scene within three minutes of receiving the call," said Lee Day, the fire department's battalion chief for training and safety.

The use of the Unified Incident Command System ensured effective communication between the regional

hazmat teams, state and local agencies and private-sector groups responding to the fire. "We had everyone there from any and every agency," said Day. "Every time something needed to be done, we had a meeting, information was shared by everyone and the decision was made by all the players."

Day outlined the initial concerns during the first hours of response. "The first priority was rescue. There was concern that a crew was on the train, so the Incident Commander committed a company to do a recon and be prepared for a rescue. They made a thorough but rapid primary search of the locomotives to make sure no one was on them."

Battalion Deputy Chief Les Puckett, incident commander in the initial stages of response, said, "The second priority was isolating and evacuating the area, because we didn't know what we were dealing with initially." Because of the possible risks posed by the thick, acrid smoke released by the fire, people from a 36-block area around the yard — including about 250 students from a nearby elementary school — were evacuated.

The responders were able to determine that the substance in the burning car was acetone. "We had a heavy fire with a lot of thick smoke and, because of the smoke and the questionable stability of the acetone, we

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decided to evacuate the school," said Day. "We went by all the protocols and procedures. The situation was under control in three to four hours and we were able to go in with the State Police to assess the scene."

VDES Hazmat Officer Bobby Clark, who was on site for the response phase of the incident, said, "There were no injuries because of the proper actions taken by the fire department. They decided to

go with a Unified Incident Command, evacuated the area based on the possible hazards, called for outside resources, attacked the problem with a team approach and relied on a variety of expertise."

Day observed, "We didn't get anyone hurt and nobody was killed. The bottom line is, I strongly advocate preplanning, having a well-developed resources list and making sure you take care of your people."

## NCCEM changes name

After much debate, members of the National Coordinating Council on Emergency Management (NCCEM) have approved a name change for the organization. The new name, the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), was implemented in March of this year.

The organization has also worked out a viable compromise for emergency managers who don't have college degrees, but wish to earn a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) designation. Experienced emergency managers may now substitute additional experience for the degree, according to the April issue of the IAEM newsletter.

The most recent candidates approved by IAEM to receive the CEM designation include two Virginians from Fairfax: Alexandra Craige from the Fairfax County Police Department and Anita Kellogg, ICF Kaiser. VDES offers its congratulations to these individuals for their achievements.

For information on the CEM, call 703/538-1795.

## Manage stress at conference

The jobs of emergency services workers — from dispatchers and police officers to upper management — can be emotionally difficult, physically draining and often threaten personal safety. Find out more about managing the stress that comes with the job by attending the 1998 Virginia Critical Incident Stress Management Annual Training conference.

Hosted by the Office of Emergency Medical Services, the conference runs from May 29-31. Emergency services people who want basic or advanced knowledge in the field of critical incident stress management (CISM) can network, learn and attend the workshops. Some topics cover basic CISM team training, juvenile death, dispatcher/police officer stress, setting up spousal support programs, CISM within Incident Management Systems and a case study of the use of CISM after the crash of TWA Flight 800.

For information, call Carol Morrow at 804/371-3500.

# Training Calendar

## Operations Division

### **Coordinators' Briefing**

May 13-14  
Culpeper

### **Disaster Response and Recovery Operations**

May 18-20  
Manassas

### **EIS Sustainment Training and Reservist Tabletop Exercise**

May 22  
Richmond

### **Reservist Training: Disaster Field Office Orientation and Federal Response Plan Overview**

May 28 and June 23  
Roanoke

### **Hazardous Weather and Flood Preparedness**

June 2-4  
Salem

### **Coordinators' Briefing**

June 10-11  
Chesapeake

### **Introduction to Emergency Management**

June 17-19  
Rockingham County

The Resources Management class, scheduled for July 22-23, has been cancelled

For information, call the VDES Training Office at 804/897-6559

## Technological Hazards Division

### **Cameo Workshop**

June 13-14  
Patrick County  
For information, call George Roarty at 804/897-6574

## Search and Rescue

### **Basic Airscent Dogteam Workshop**

May 16-17  
Richmond  
For information, call Winnie Pennington at 804/674-2422

## Conferences

### **FEMA Region III Severe Weather Conference**

May 27-29  
Ocean City, Md.  
For information, call Leslie Boehler at 215/931-5723

### **Association of Public Safety Communications Officials East Coast Regional Conference**

May 17-20  
Virginia Beach  
For information, call Terri Walker at 757/441-5600

## **National Search and Rescue Annual Conference**

May 27-30  
Portland, Oregon  
For information, call Mylea Wade at 703/222-6277

## **1998 Virginia Critical Incident Stress Management Annual Training**

May 29-31  
Virginia Beach  
For information, call Carol Morrow at 804/371-3500

## Training for dogs

**F**rom July 6-10, the Virginia Bloodhound Search and Rescue Association and the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office will host a training seminar for law enforcement and search and rescue people. If you want to establish a mantrailing bloodhound unit or keep your training up-to-date, sign up for this course. All Virginia law enforcement officers receive Mandatory Inservice Retraining credits for this course. For information, call Terry Davis at 703/777-0408.

## Classes for hazmat

**T**his September 3, the VCU/MCV Department of Preventive Medicine in Richmond is offering a one-day seminar on underground storage tanks. By December 22 of this year, underground storage tanks must be upgraded to meet stringent environmental standards or they will be closed. This seminar will help you understand and meet these requirements.

Sessions cover federal, state and local statutes and regulations, RCRA, remediation techniques and more. For information on this \$95 seminar, call Christine Coggins at 804/828-4548.

## Send in your E-mail address

**T**his is the chance to get your name in lights — or at least your e-mail address on the VDES Web site. If you have an e-mail you want posted, send your name, your job title and your e-mail address to: [jhoots.des@state.va.us](mailto:jhoots.des@state.va.us), and we will post it in the Emergency Manager Directory.



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